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361 The ground floor of the house is usually the highest and the others are all about the same. Some of the houses in Shibam are built on the slope of the hill and are therefore provided with cellars. The height of the wall facing the outside of the city in these circumstances is about 70 *dhiraa* or 105 feet high. Bigger houses are constructed of two or more houses built together.

The life of a house is said to be two hundred to two hundred and fifty years but the age it reaches depends on the privies being kept dry and cleaned out regularly. If this is not done the damp saps the lower part of the clay walls and causes splits necessitating demolition. Outside the walls of Shibam and the rich man's suburb of Seheil there are villas, some of them built in Eastern Indian style but none of them as big as those in the city. Several houses in these Hadhramaut towns are provided with most attractive and welcome swimming pools in which the water is usually kept running by means of small petrol engines. [402]

The general principles of house construction seem to be pretty much the same all over the upper Hadhramaut, but it is really only in the main wadi that elaborate structures are found. Apart from the *dars* in which many of the tribesmen live, it may be interesting to record that in one wadi through which we travelled to the north of the main wadi towards the desert we found troglodyte Badawin living in caves in the walls of the wadi. The front of these caves was usually built up with dry stone walling, leaving only a small gap for the entrance of man and beast. Down the Wadi Maseilah between Qabr Hud and the sea the Manahil and the Mahra live in huts built of sticks not more than 5 feet high. In two villages on the Mahra coast many of the inhabitants lived in tents.